
**Citizenship Information for Members of the HMONG and
LAOTIAN Community**

**Do you want to become a citizen of the United States, but are
worried about passing the English test and civics exam?**

Can you answer "Yes" to any of the following questions?

1. Were you admitted to the United States as a refugee from Laos, **AND** did you support the United States military by serving with a special guerrilla unit (SGU) or irregular forces operating from a base in Laos at any time between February 28, 1961 through September 18, 1978? **OR**
2. Are you the widow of such a veteran described above who died or was killed in Laos, Thailand, or Viet Nam and were you admitted to the United States as a refugee from Laos? **OR**
3. Were you married to such a veteran on the day the veteran applied for admission into the United States as a refugee from Laos?

If you answer "YES" to any of these questions then under the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000 you will **NOT** have to take the English exam, and you can take a simpler version of the citizenship test in the language of your choice. **You must bring your own interpreter on the date of your exam.**

Attention: Hmong Naturalization Act

Deadline for soldiers and spouses:

November 26, 2001

Deadline for persons widowed in Southeast Asia:

May 1, 2002

It is **VERY** important that you **file a naturalization application (form N-400) on or before November 26, 2001 (on or before May 1, 2002 for persons widowed in Southeast Asia).** If you have already submitted a naturalization application, do not send another one.

When you come for your interview, you must also submit proof of military service. This proof could include the following:

1. Original documents issued in or around Laos, **OR**
2. An affidavit from your superior officer, **OR**
3. Two affidavits from other individuals who personally knew of your service and who also served with a special guerrilla unit or irregular forces in support of the United States, **OR**
4. Other proof, such as documentation provided by organizations maintaining records of service of Hmong/Laotian veterans and their families.

Normally, INS will be able to determine from their records whether you have come to the United States as a refugee. However, if you have documentation to support the manner of your entry, please bring that with you as well. If necessary, the INS may also request information from the Secretary of Defense regarding your service to determine your eligibility under this Act.

Under the regular naturalization process, you will not have to take the English test if:

- You are 55 years of age or older and have lived in the United States as a permanent resident for fifteen (15) years or more, **OR**
- You are 50 years of age or older and have lived in the United States as a permanent resident for twenty (20) years or more.

Also, you will be given a simpler version of the civics exam if:

- You are 65 years of age or older and have lived in the United States as a permanent resident for twenty (20) years or more.

You might be eligible for both the language exemption AND the simpler civics exam under the regular naturalization process if:

- You have a qualifying developmental or physical disability or mental impairment. If so, you should submit a Medical Certification for Disability Exception form (Form N-648). INS will then review your case to determine if you are eligible.